

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 1, line 11, as follows:

The present invention relates to a loading-assisting apparatus which is designed for use with a centrifuge, and which is used ~~when to make a weight adjustment to~~ samples (e.g., blood samples) to be processed when the samples are loaded in the centrifuge, ~~so as to make predetermined weight adjustment to the samples.~~

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 21, as follows:

The loading-assisting apparatus for use with a centrifuge, which embodies the present invention, comprises: a measuring device configured to measure the weight of each of sample groups loaded in the buckets of the centrifuge; a determination device configured to determine how the measured weight of each sample group differs from a reference value; and an adjustment/loading device configured to make weight adjustments to each sample group in accordance with results of determination the determination device makes, and to load each sample group.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 26, as follows:

An adjusting/loading device 130 is provided above the automatic transport device 1. based on the results of the determination the determination device 120 makes, the adjusting/loading device 130 makes weight adjustments to the racks 30 holding sample vessels. After this weight adjustment, the racks 30 holding sample vessels are loaded in the centrifuge 2, as indicated by arrow P.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 3, as follows:

FIG. 3 shows a loading-assisting apparatus 200 for use with a centrifuge, according to the second embodiment of the present invention. This apparatus sequentially loads objects G to be

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processed (sample vessels 3 in the second embodiment), which are transported in the direction of arrow X by an automatic transport device 1, into the centrifuge 2. Simultaneous with this loading operation, the apparatus 200 makes weight adjustments to eliminate the adverse effects stemming from the weight variations of the sample vessels 3 (i.e., the objects to be processed).